

NSC BRIEFING

26 June 1957

MAO SETS LIMITS TO CRITICISM

I. Several leaders of puppet parties in Communist China are in trouble for criticizing the Peiping regime too boldly.

A. The best-known of them are three figurehead cabinet ministers, Lo Lung-chi, Chang Po-chun and Chang Nai-chi, and the old Yunnan warlord Lung Yun, one of whose sons is [redacted]

STATOTHR [redacted]

II. In criticizing the regime, these and other so-called "democratic" leaders had gone beyond the limits now set forth in the revised version of Mao Tse-tung's February speech.

A. Mao's criteria for distinguishing "flowers" from "weeds" were probably not contained in his original speech. If they had been, it is doubtful that the critics would have been so outspoken.

III. The criticism now under attack went too far by challenging basic dogmas of both Moscow and Peiping.

A. Last year, during the troubles in Eastern Europe, Moscow and Peiping reaffirmed these dogmas in order to define the permissible limits of "liberalization."

IV. Mao Tse-tung again has his eye on Eastern Europe as well as his Chinese audience in attempting now to define the permissible limits of discussion in China.

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- A. Words and actions are proper, Mao says, if they strengthen the principle of Communist party leadership of the state, help to consolidate the centralized dictatorship, advance socialist transformation and construction, and benefit relations among Communist states.
- V. The puppet party leaders ran head-on into Mao's criteria.
 - A. The three cabinet ministers all criticized the Communist party's monopoly of real power and all questioned its basic policies of socialization.
 - B. Lung Yun reportedly criticized the Soviet stripping of Manchuria after World War II and Soviet policy on loans to China--which he compared unfavorably with US policy on war loans to allies.
- VI. Mao has said that those who reject his criteria may still argue their case.
 - A. Thus we do not expect the critics to be severely punished, although some may be expelled from their parties and lose their government jobs.
 - B. In attacking these critics, Peiping is interested primarily in illustrating its policy on criticism rather than in destroying these particular people.
 - C. Henceforth, few "democratic" leaders will be brave enough to attack the regime at its core.
 - D. However, in refuting offending views, Chinese are giving them wide publicity--and are probably not sorry to have Lung Yun's "right deviation" read in Moscow.

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VII. Mao's criteria will not give Warsaw much comfort.

A. Poles had taken earlier, unofficial accounts of the new Chinese doctrine as meaning Chinese support for their independent position.

1. They said Mao's doctrines were "pregnant with significance," claiming Chinese experience was as valuable as Soviet.

VIII. Orthodox Satellites, however, will ^{now} find it easier to cope with stirrings of "liberal" interest in Mao's ideas.

A. They will even be able to find justification for their current hard line in Mao's speech.

1. The Hungarian regime, for example, praises it for its "great ideological and practical aid for Hungarian communists"--before it was published they stated flatly that the Chinese doctrines could not be applied in a wholesale manner in Hungary.

2. The Czechs for their part claim that Mao's analysis refutes the Western belief that there was a gulf between the government and the peoples of socialist countries.

3. The present Chinese position will obviate the need for them to make a direct attack on the doctrines of a member of the Bloc--an act which would have tacitly admitted that there is more than one road to socialism.

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B. The Chinese, on the other hand, will probably be as unhappy to see their ideas ^{use} and to justify terror in Hungary as they evidently were to see them ^{use} and to justify breaking up the collective farm system in Poland.